



VOLUME 1,
ISSUE 1

Let's Roll!

City of San Antonio
Graffiti Abatement

Volunteer Newsletter



MARCH 2012

Joe Frank Picazo
Newsletter Editor
Volunteer Services Coordinator
Joe.Picazo@sanantonio.gov
(210)207-5421

GRAFFITI ABATEMENT PROGRAM STAFF

Lisa McKenzie
Neighborhood Services Coordinator
Lisa.McKenzie@sanantonio.gov
(210)207-5430

Fabian Molina
Supervisor
Fabian.Molina@sanantonio.gov
(210)219-7233

Manuel Reyes
Supervisor
Manuel.Reyes@sanantonio.gov
(210)260-3095

Lori Campos
Administrative Assistant I
Lori.Campos@sanantonio.gov
(210)207-BUFF

Jose Garza
Crew Leader

William Gonzalez
Crew Leader

Steve Boylan
Crew Leader

David Medina, Jr.
Crew Leader

Maintenance Workers

Albert Arriola
Estevan Parras
Michael Guerrero
Daniel Chapa
Manuel Torres
Nancy Velazquez
Daniel Carlee
Gilbert Garza
Edward Arguello



GRAFFITI STINKS!

Volunteers Are Vital to Our Mission

Since 2006, the City of San Antonio has invested a tremendous amount of resources to design and implement a variety of innovative programs to counter the graffiti culture and eliminate graffiti in our community.

The city's commitment to the issue of graffiti is reflected in this year's adopted budget; for the first time in its history, the operating budget for the Graffiti Abatement Program has exceeded \$1 million and three new positions were created to expand the reach of the program.

While these improvements are exciting, there is no question that the time, energy and passion of our dedicated volunteer corps has been at the forefront of reducing the presence of graffiti. Each year, volunteers from area schools,

churches, businesses and community organizations are responsible for abating thousands of square feet of graffiti. The collective efforts and achievements of our community volunteers are celebrated annually during the Graffiti Wipeout event.



In an effort to provide volunteers with a more meaningful volunteer experience, our program is in the process of finalizing several programs that will allow individuals and groups to complete projects that address specific needs within their respective communities.

The Graffiti Rangers is

one such program that empowers volunteers with the resources necessary to effectively eliminate graffiti and promote community education and awareness. More information on this program can be found in this newsletter. For additional information on this program, and volunteer opportunities in general, please contact Joe Frank Picazo, Volunteer Services Coordinator, at 207-5421 or joe.picazo@sanantonio.gov.

I thank you for your continued dedication and look forward to continuing to work with you as together we strive to beautify our city.

Lisa McKenzie

Neighborhood Services Coordinator/Graffiti
Graffiti Abatement Program

Girl Scouts Partner With Community to Eliminate Graffiti

On the afternoon of February 3rd, almost fifty volunteers from Girl Scout Troop 3042, UTSA Voices organization, CPS Energy employees, the Great Northwest HOA and other community activists joined the City and District 6 Councilman Ray Lopez to wipe out graffiti along a heavily traveled drainage area on Tezel Rd.

As volunteers completed the project, a number of area residents stopped by to

express their appreciation and to get more information on the Graffiti Abatement Program.

For members of the Girl Scouts and UTSA, this experience was rewarding not only because they were able to beautify the area while making new friends, but because they also fulfilled volunteer service requirements.



Around the City...Volunteers Make a Difference



Trinity University students in a drainage channel abating graffiti on the Westside

On February 11th, student volunteers from a Trinity University sorority and fraternity rolled up their sleeves and tackled graffiti along a Westside drainage channel.

The picture on the left shows two of those volunteers working to remove tags covering a drainage tunnel which are a common target of graffiti vandals.

Each year, student volunteers from local universities partner with the city's Graffiti Abatement Program to clean up graffiti hotspots in heavily traveled corridors.

If you or a family member attend a local university or high school you can contact our offices at 207-5421 to coordinate a project or schedule a graffiti presentation on your campus.

Graffiti Ranger Orientation Schedule

Monday, March 19th
6:00pm—7:00pm
Code Enforcement Office
1400 S. Flores

Saturday, April 14th
10:00am—11:00am
Code Enforcement Office
1400 S. Flores

Tuesday, May 22nd
6:00pm—7:00pm
Code Enforcement Office
1400 S. Flores



Get Involved!



City of San Antonio offers innovative volunteer opportunities

The Graffiti Ranger Volunteer Program is a new program designed to offer neighborhood leaders and volunteers a menu of volunteer opportunities that will allow program participants to quickly and effectively address graffiti issues in your community. Candidates must submit an application, pass a background check and complete defensive driving.

Upon being accepted into the program, volunteers will have access to utilize city vehicles, supplies and equipment to complete assignments. The Graffiti Ranger Program is more than just a graffiti abatement program, volunteers will also assist with special projects, educational outreach activities at local schools and complete neighborhood assessments. Program orientations have been scheduled so that anyone interested can obtain more information on the program and receive an overview of the application process.

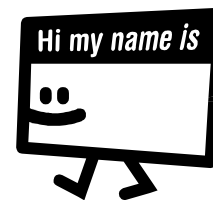
For more information or to schedule a presentation to your neighborhood contact Joe Frank Picazo.

Graffiti Terminology...

Report graffiti to the hotline, (210) 207-BUFF (2833)!

Buff—To remove painted graffiti with chemicals and other instruments, or to paint over it with a flat color.

Sticker—Also referred to as "labels" or "slaps". A sticker with the writer's tag on it. A sticker can be deployed more quickly than other forms of graffiti, making it a favorite in any public place such as newspaper dispensers, stop signs, phone booths etc. A popular sticker that was used originally was



the "Hello my name is" red stickers in which a writer would write his or her graffiti name in the blank space.

Toy—Used as an adjective to describe poor work, or as a noun meaning an inexperienced or unskilled writer.

Spotlight On Volunteers: the Great Northwest

Since 2007, a group of dedicated volunteers from the Great Northwest, located in City Council District 6, have spent



Dedicated volunteers hard at work cleaning a privacy fence

countless hours abating graffiti within their neighborhood. While this group consists of approximately 30 volunteers, their efforts often inspire average homeowners to roll up their sleeves and pickup a paint brush to help remove graffiti.

The group was motivated to take action based on the simple

desire to preserve the beauty of their community. But to Bill and Mike, two active members of the volunteer corps, the graffiti represents someone's effort "to exert control over our neighborhood," and the volunteers remain committed to "give back to the community and to take a stand for our right to live in a safe and pleasant environment."

What advice would Bill and Mike give to those individuals and neighborhoods that want to take a stand against graffiti? "Don't give up." While volunteerism is vital since a community must first demonstrate the desire to help itself in order for outside assistance to be effective, "there will be disappointments and setbacks but persistence and determination will carry you through".

The many valuable partnerships that the Great Northwest

has forged with the City's Graffiti Abatement Program, San Antonio Police Department Prue Substation SAFFE Unit, and the Office of Councilman Ray Lopez is a testament to the determination and commitment of Bill, Mike and their fellow volunteers.

It is that spirit of partnership that has allowed the volunteer efforts within the Great Northwest to make a visible, powerful impact beyond its borders. According to Bill and Mike, the group has been able to "work with other people and communities to combat graffiti and together we've been able to reduce graffiti by more than 50%"

The next time you drive through northwest San Antonio, in and around the Great Northwest, remember the efforts of volunteers like Bill and Mike who enhance the beauty of our city one paintbrush stroke a time.

"Whether people volunteer for one hour or many, many hours, they each make a difference because we could not achieve what we have achieved with out each and every one of them"

Did You Know You Can Adopt A Bus Shelter?



Chances are you pass several VIA bus shelters daily as you commute to and from work, school and home. In the past you may have even noticed trash, graffiti or other concerns in the area surrounding the shelter in need of attention. Ever wonder how **you** could help VIA keep these areas clean?

You, your neighbors and community organization are eligible to adopt one, or several, bus stops in and around your neighborhood. To adopt a VIA bus stop volunteers must

commit to the following:

- Assist in removal of debris at least once per week
- Report the need for repairs or graffiti removal
- Report the need for security

For more information on program enrollment or to request an application form please contact VIA's Community Relations Office at 362-2370

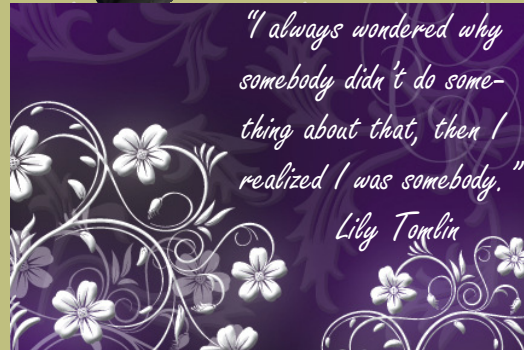
Check It Out!



On February 15th, Councilman Ray Lopez (District 6) and Councilman Cris Medina (District 7) join city officials at the groundbreaking ceremony for the City's newest service center to be located at Cal-laghan and Commerce, which will also be home to the graffiti abatement field staff.



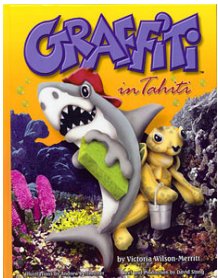
CPS Energy employees recently partnered with the City for a Mini-Wipeout.



"I always wondered why somebody didn't do something about that, then I realized I was somebody."

Lily Tomlin

Graffiti in Tahiti: A Cautionary Tale About the Dangers of Graffiti



Over the last two years, City staff, Council Members and community leaders have guided thousands of area elementary 4th grade students through an undersea journey that chronicles the consequences of graffiti from both a personal and community perspective.

These book readings have proven to be both successful and popular. More importantly, the lessons shared through this activity often sparks a broader discussion on the impact of graffiti in our daily lives and delivers a strong message against vandalizing property.

In September of 2011, approximately

20 volunteers read this book to over 4,000 4th graders in almost 50 public schools. Help us continue graffiti prevention by scheduling a book reading at a campus near you, contact Lisa McKenzie, (210)207-5420 or via email at Lisa.McKenzie@sanantonio.gov.

Better yet, to read the book to your area elementary school 4th grade class, please contact Joe Frank Picazo for volunteer processing, (210)207-5421 or via email at Joe.Picazo@sanantonio.gov.

NOW YOU KNOW: For this project, 245 copies of this book were donated to every elementary public school in San Antonio.

At left, SAPD Officers Menell Orosco and Marcos Serda read to students at Cable Elementary; at right, Lisa McKenzie reads to students at Dellview Elementary.

